

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-20 (Cancelled).

21. (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide comprising an antigen, which antigen has an amino acid sequence that shares at least 90% sequence homology with the amino acid sequence encoded by the ~~post-transfusional non-A non-B hepatitis (PT-NANBH) virus genome and which is encoded by~~ the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:20, or in bases 308-2116 of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:21, or by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:22, wherein said antigen binds to an antibody against a post-transfusional non-A non-B hepatitis (PT-NANBH) virus.

22. (Previously Presented) The isolated nucleic acid according to claim 21, wherein said amino acid sequence shares at least 90% sequence homology with the amino acid sequence encoded by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3 or SEQ ID NO:4.

23. (Previously Presented) The isolated nucleic acid according to claim 22, wherein said amino acid sequence shares at least 95% sequence homology with the amino acid sequence encoded by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3 or SEQ ID NO:4.

24. (Previously Presented) The isolated nucleic acid according to claim 23 wherein said amino acid sequence shares at least 98% sequence homology with the amino acid sequence encoded by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3 or SEQ ID NO:4.

25. (Currently Amended) The isolated nucleic acid according to claim 21 wherein said amino acid sequence shares at least 95% sequence homology with the amino acid sequence encoded by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:20 or bases 308-2116 of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:21 or by the nucleotide sequence ~~by~~ of SEQ ID NO:22.

26. (Currently Amended) The isolated nucleic acid according to claim 25, wherein said amino acid sequence shares at least 98% sequence homology with the amino acid sequence encoded by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:4,

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SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:20 or bases 308-2116 of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:21 or by the nucleotide sequence ~~by~~ of SEQ ID NO:22.

27. (Previously Presented) An isolated nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence encoded by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:5, or bases 308-504 of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:18, or by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:19 or SEQ ID NO:20, or bases 308-2116 of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:21 or by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:22.

28. (Previously Presented) The isolated nucleic acid according to claim 27, wherein said polypeptide has the amino acid sequence encoded by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:4, or SEQ ID NO:5.

29. (Previously Presented) The isolated nucleic acid according to claim 28 wherein said polypeptide has the amino acid sequence encoded by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3 or SEQ ID NO:4.

30. (Previously Presented) An isolated nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide comprising an antigen having an amino acid sequence that shares at least 98% sequence homology with the amino acid sequence encoded by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:5.

31. (Previously Presented) An isolated nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide comprising an antigen having an amino acid sequence that shares at least 98% sequence homology with the amino acid sequence encoded by the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:18 from bases 308-504.

32. (Previously Presented) An isolated nucleic acid having the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:3, SEQ ID NO:4, SEQ ID NO:5, bases 308-504 of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ NO:18, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:20, bases 308-2116 of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:21 or the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:22.

33. (Previously Presented) The isolated nucleic acid according to any one of claims 21, 27, 30, 31, and 32 wherein said nucleic acid is DNA.

34. (Previously Presented) An expression vector comprising the nucleic acid of any one of claims 21, 27, 30, 31 and 32.

35. (Previously Presented) A host cell comprising the expression vector of claim 34.

36. (Previously Presented) A process for preparing a polypeptide comprising culturing the host cell according to claim 35 under conditions so that said nucleic acid is expressed and said polypeptide is thereby produced.